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GEORGE'S
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FROM

Mary H. Deane

Lucy Waterston Deane -
from her dear Grandfather R. W.

August- 1851.



GEORGE AT HOME.

GEORGE'S
ADVENTURES
IN
THE COUNTRY.

BY AMEREL.

NEW YORK:
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PHILADELPHIA:
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*From the estate of
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PREFACE.

THIS book has been written for small children, who are able to read pretty well in words of two or three syllables. It will be found to contain much useful information about birds, fishes, and other animals, which, though abundant in our fields during the summer, are not often seen by children whose lives are mostly,

(3)

or altogether, passed in town. Some stories are interspersed through its pages, in order to convey additional instruction, in a form usually more pleasing to children than description. It is believed that the style as well as the subjects of the book, is adapted to the capacity of the youthful mind ; while the numerous cuts, all relating strictly to portions of the text, cannot fail to deepen the impression produced by its perusal. Above all, care has been taken that the child, to the full extent of his yet undeveloped intellect, should be taught to read in the works of nature, proofs of the being, wisdom, and goodness of God.



GEORGE'S ADVENTURE IN THE COUNTRY.

I ONCE knew a little boy named George Green. I want you to remember his name, children, for I am going to tell you a great deal about him. From the time that he learned to speak, he was always kind and gentle, so that his father and mother, and their friends, thought he would become a good and great man. I never heard that he cried an hour or more after his sister's doll, nor struck at

people when they took from him what he ought not to have had, nor sat pouting at the table, if his mother would not let him eat what she knew would make him sick. A good child does not act in this manner. Nor did he catch and kill flies; for he had been told that flies and other animals, can feel pain as well as boys can, and that it is sinful to hurt them, merely out of sport. He loved to sit by his mother, and hear her sing, or talk to him; and if she was not busy, he would ask her about a number of things which he heard or saw around him, but

which he was too young to know much about, unless some one explained them to him. His father had told him, that one great Being, whom no body could see, had made all trees, and flowers, and animals, and the great sky above us; and George loved to look out at night upon the still fields, on which the moon shone brightly, and at the stars which twinkle on, night after night, and year after year, without ever growing dim or tired. Then he would think of the great Being who made all these wonderful things, until it seemed that a low voice

within him was whispering, that he must love such a Being, and pray to Him every day to be made wiser and better. So George Green was a good little boy, and was loved by every one who knew him.

George Green's father lived in a large city, where there were great stores, and halls, and museums, and gardens, and other fine sights. But at the time I am writing about, George had not seen many of these things, because he was too young to be taken to them. Nor was he permitted to go into the street very far; for

once he had been lost, and was taken to a strange house, where he had to stay all night. After that day he was kept at home with his mother nearly all the time. She taught him to read, and let him look at some fine large books of hers, which were full of painted pictures. She knew that George would take great care not to tear them. One book had pictures of animals in it. George was very fond of looking at it, and his mother spread it out on the table before him, for it was too heavy for him to hold upon his lap. George asked many questions

of his mother, and thus learned about each animal. He knew more than most boys of his age, about lions, camels, and deer, and bears, and snakes, and sharks, and whales. By taking notice of every thing around him, and asking questions, he soon learned more than those who were much older, and had besides, been to school for two or three years.

George's father loved to encourage his little boy, so he bought him a stick horse to run about with; and when George grew a little older, his father bought him a rocking horse. These pleased the little

boy very much. When the sun shone warmly, he would gallop about the garden on his stick horse; but if it rained, he staid in the house, and his mother rocked him on the hobby horse. It was rather high for him; so he never got on it unless some older person was near. So with his horses, and his books, and while talking to his mother, George passed his time much more happily than if he had run every day through the street.

When George was a little more than five years old, his father promised, that

he would take him to his uncle John's, in the country. It was then summer—the month of June; the sun was warm and bright, and the days were as long as they would be during the whole year. Oh how glad George was to hear that he was to go where there were wide fields, and handsome birds, and tall grass to run among. All day he could talk of nothing but the country; and his heart beat quick with joy when he thought of the fine things he would see. He was to go in a week; but the days seemed to pass away very slowly, and often he

would leave his play, to come to his mother, and ask how soon it would be night. He did not play any longer with his hobby horse, but used to walk up and down the house and the garden, wishing for the week to pass. At last his mother told him that it was wrong to wish for time to move faster, since the Being, who made all things, knew well how to make every thing move in its proper order, and in exactly the right time.

But at last the week rolled away. The night before George was to start, he could

scarcely sleep, so full was he of thoughts about his journey. In the morning he was up and dressed before sunrise—which, you know, is very early on summer mornings. His father smiled when he found that George was out of bed before him. He said, "Do not hurry, my son, for we shall not get to uncle John's any sooner." But George could not listen to any thing that morning. After he had been washed, and had his hair combed, he sat down with the family to breakfast. He did not eat half so much as usual; but when his mother

asked him if he had enough, he said, "yes." I do not suppose he told what was not true; for he was in such joy at the thought of riding in a carriage, that he did not feel hungry. But his father would not allow him to rise from the table until he had eaten more. As soon as breakfast was over, George dragged a chair to the window, climbed into it, and began to look up and down the street for uncle John's carriage. His father knew it would not come for two hours; but he said nothing, because he wanted to teach George a useful lesson. Whenever a car-

riage came near, poor George thought it was his uncle's, and his little heart beat with joy. When it rolled by without stopping, he was very still, waiting for another. But at last he grew tired and fretful; and when a few more had passed on, George's patience gave way, and the tears came to his eyes. At last he got down from the chair, ran to his father, and burst into tears.

"What is the matter, George," said Mr. Green, kindly .

"Uncle—uncle—John—won't come," he sobbed, and his face was flushed with

vexation. His father was silent for a while, and then said: "My son, this is not acting like a good boy. Do you not know how often I have told you to be patient, and instead of waiting idly for any good, to employ yourself in something useful till it comes. Now, come, sit on my knee, and I will tell you something about Uncle John and his family, so that you will not be strange when you go there."

I cannot, children, tell you all that George's father told him about Uncle John; but you shall hear a little.—This

uncle was a very good man, and lived in an old fashioned house, about thirty miles from the city in which Mr. Green lived. He had three children, one about the age of George, one younger. None of them had ever been to town. Uncle John was a farmer, and had many fields of wheat, corn, vegetables, and grass, beside orchards of apples, pears, cherries, and peaches. Some of the woods, near his house, were of chestnut trees, and many other kinds of nut trees; but they had no nuts on when George went there. Uncle John kept several



UNCLE JOHN'S FARM.

cows; and out of their milk his butter and cheese were made. He had also ducks, chickens, sheep, and other useful animals. He ground his grain into flour at a mill; and he had two large stone barns, in which he stored his hay and his grain, until he wanted to use them. Uncle John was very fond of children, and often gave the boys and girls of poor parents, apples, or meal, or new milk to carry home. When he came to town he always bought something good for Mr. Green's family, and for little George, whom he loved very much.

George's father was telling him all these things, and George had forgotten to listen for the carriage, when all at once it stopped at the door. The little boy could hardly believe that he had been listening so long to his father—so fast does time seem to go when we are not waiting for it. Mr. Green carried his son to the window, and, lo! Uncle John was just getting out. George clapped his hands with joy; and his father then hastened to the door to receive his guest. Uncle John did not stay long; George was put in the carriage

with his father, and some good things for George's little cousins. Then Uncle John got in; and soon the horses were trotting away over the rough stones, and then out of the noisy city, toward Uncle John's house.

I cannot tell you all that George saw during the ride. He had never been in the country before, so he was greatly pleased with every thing around. But Uncle John's place was far off; they were nearly eight hours reaching it; so at last the little boy grew tired of seeing the trees, and fences, and streams of

water. Then he laid his head on his father's arm, and fell asleep. He was asleep when Uncle John drove up to the gate leading to his house. When the carriage stopped, George's Aunt Mary, and three cousins came to see him—and when they saw he was asleep, each one wanted to carry him into the house. But he was too heavy for them altogether. Mr. Green was very glad to see the children, and after he had laid George in his aunt's arms, he took up the two smallest of Uncle John's children, and carried them into the house. Aunt Mary wanted

to waken George, that he might get some supper; but his father thought it best to carry him to bed. He did not wake till morning. By and by, Uncle John came in, and then they all sat down to a nice meal, which George's aunt had taken care to have ready in time.

When George awoke in the morning, he did not know where he was, nor what to think of the strange objects around him. At last his aunt came to his bed side, and when she saw he was awake, spoke to him kindly, and kissed him. George had never seen her before; at

first he was afraid; but at last he let her dress him, and take him down stairs. There his father, and uncle, and the children, were waiting for him. He soon began to feel at home, and ate breakfast with a good appetite, for he was very hungry. While eating, he could hear the birds sing by the window, and see the honeysuckles running along the arbor, and the clear, blue sky, brighter than ever it seemed in town, and he thought within himself, that Uncle John's house was the most beautiful one in the world. Every thing he ate tasted better than

similar things at home; and he wished that his mother were with him, so that they need never again go to town.

After breakfast, George and his two oldest cousins were allowed to walk by themselves in the garden. George thought that he had never seen so fine a place before; and, indeed, Uncle John had spared no pains to make his garden very beautiful. A little white gate opened into it, from which a fine, broad path led the whole way through, and many smaller paths crossed this, and ran to all parts of the garden. Beds contain-

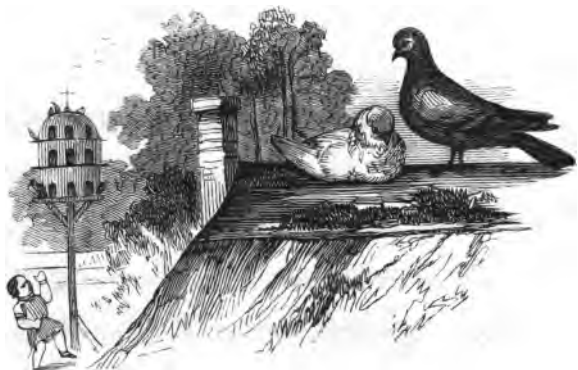
ing many fine flowers and costly plants, were on each side of the walks; and when George looked down the main path he could not see to the end of it. The sun was shining on roses, and lilies, and pinks, and a thousand little birds were singing from the bushes, and fine butterflies, with gay painted wings, were fluttering about from flower to flower. Honeysuckles and sweet-briar, ran all along the white fence, and a delicious fragrance from vines and flowers, filled the air around. As the little boys walked along, they saw the dew glittering in the

open flowers, and heard the bees humming around them while gathering their honey. After they had gone a long distance down the path, they came to another gate, which led into a garden of vegetables; but this they had been told not to open. Then George's cousin led him round through another path, which led to a third gate, that opened into a small yard where pigeons were kept. They could go through this yard to the house; so Henry, the oldest boy, undid the latch, and held open the gate until the two children had passed through.

George was glad to see the pigeons. He had often seen them flying by his father's house, and wished that he could be near enough to see exactly how they looked. Now he could come so near that he peeped into their houses, and watched all their motions. Henry told him a great deal about them, and showed him two that Uncle John had given him for his own.

"What do you do with pigeons?" asked George.

"Sometimes we sell them," said Henry, "and now and then we eat one."



THE PIGEONS.

"Are pigeons good to eat?" said his cousin.

"Yes," replied Henry; "they are more tender than beef, and mother makes soup out of one whenever any of us are sick."

"Do they grow as big as chickens," asked George. Henry laughed, and said,

"No, they never grow larger than that blue one, you see standing on the little outhouse, yonder."

George wished that he could have a large yard, and pigeons to keep, so that he might often watch them going in and out of their houses, and be near enough

to see their bright colors change as they moved themselves about in the sun. But now the children heard George's aunt calling to them from the house; and as they were good boys, they hurried through the yard, and to the piazza, where Aunt Mary was standing. She was holding something in her hand, which looked clear, like candy, but had a number of holes in it. She held it up, and asked George if he knew what it was. The little boy said he did not

“It is a honey-comb,” said his aunt,
“and I will give it to you to look at;

and now tell me who you think made it?"

George had seen pictures of bees in his mother's books at home; he had also tasted honey, but not while it was in the comb. He had been told what it was that made honey, and if his father had asked him, he would have answered correctly. But at the moment when his aunt asked him, he stood a while to think. At last he looked up, and said, "Did Uncle John make it, Aunt?"

Henry and his brother Charles, both laughed; but their mother told them it

was very rude to laugh at their little cousin, when he had answered as well as he could. George hung his head, and said no more, till his aunt told him that honey-comb was made by bees. George smiled then, and looked glad; for he remembered all the pictures of bees, that he had seen in his mother's book at home. So he looked in his aunt's face, and said,

‘Mother told me that bees made honey; but the honey that we have on the table, is not like this. I cannot take it in my hand, and it is very good to eat.

What is this honey-comb good for, aunt?"

"Taste it, George." He did so, and his face beamed with joy. "It is just like honey, aunt," he said.

"There is honey in it, George. These little holes are called cells. See how even each one is. They are wax, and the bees make them deep and hollow, so that they can put the honey in them. Each cell is full of honey; you may eat this small piece; but you must not have any more for a while, or it will make you sick."

“Did you ever read the story of the bear and the bees, George,” asked Henry. George answered that he had not. Then Henry told him that he had read in his book of fables of a bear, which was so greedy of honey, that he broke into a garden where bee-hives were, and after upsetting them, began to eat the honey. But the bees flew about him in swarms, and stung him so badly, that he had to run away blind, and almost dead.

“Was it true?” asked George.

“I do not suppose it happened exactly as the fable book says,” replied his



THE BEAR AND THE BEES.

cousin; "but bears might upset a hive if they could get a chance to do so. But father says, that this story was written to show that we ought not to meddle with things that are not our own."

George now thanked his aunt, and put a piece of the honey-comb into his mouth. He thought that he had never tasted any thing so sweet. While he was eating it, his aunt told him he might go with Henry through the pigeon yard, and out of a gate into a small lane that led to one of Uncle John's stone barns. Here he would find Uncle John and his father,

who would take a walk with him into the country. George set off in high spirits, with his cousin, running with him through the pigeon yard, and out of the gate which opened toward the barn. Then they stopped to take breath, and eat their honey; for Aunt Mary had given each of them a piece. George had a great deal to ask his cousin; so he walked slowly down the lane, and soon began his questions.

Harry, aunt says that bees make all the cells in this honey-comb; and mother told me that they make honey from

flowers. How can they cut this wax so smooth and even, and have all the cells alike?"

"They do it with their feet and their mouths," Henry answered. "Did you never see bees at work in a hive?"

"No," said George; "but I wish I could. For I can't see how they can make cells. How do they get them all of the same size?"

'Father can tell you more about it than I can," Henry replied; "but I know one thing. God made the bees and the flowers: and he makes them know how

to form their cells. He made the birds, too, and they build nests as wonderful as these cells.'

George thought this was very strange. He had seen pictures of birds' nests, but he did not know much about them. So he asked Henry what they were made out of, and how big they were.

"They are made (said Henry,) out of hay, and hair, and wool. Some are as small as the hollow of your hand, and others as big as your hat."

"But how can they stand, Harry, if they are built only of hay?"

“They do not stand at all,” answered his cousin. “The birds hang them on branches of trees, or among bushes. You will see a bird’s nest one of these days, George.’

Just at this moment, Uncle John and Mr. Green, came out of the barn, and began to walk up the lane toward the two boys. “Now,” said Henry, “for a race,”—and he and George ran as fast as they could toward their fathers. They soon came up to them, when Uncle John lifted little George, in his arms, and held him high up, that he might see the coun-

try. Mr. Green then told George, that he was going to take a walk with him, and Uncle John said, that Henry might go along. He took each of the boys by the hand, while Uncle John walked up to the house, in order to attend to some business.

After they had walked around the barn, and out into a meadow, they came to a fine pond of water, as clear and bright as glass. Thick bushes, and reeds, and water-lilies, were growing along the edge, and many beautiful fishes could be seen gliding along, be-

neath the surface. This was the first time that George had seen so large a pond of water ; so that he was very much pleased. He stood very quiet, watching the fishes as they darted up and down, or balanced themselves in the water, while their bright scales seemed of a hundred different colors. But in a little time, something still more wonderful appeared. A large bird came sailing from behind some bushes, and stopped in the middle of the pond, to look at the two boys and Mr. Green. Its body was all over white, and it moved its long neck

about in a very graceful manner. Though so large, it moved on the water without any noise, and its smooth, white feathers seemed hardly wet. At first, George drew back, for he was afraid; but his father told him to be quiet, for it would not hurt him.

“Tell him what it is, Henry,” said Mr. Green.

“It is a swan, George,” said Henry, “it will not hurt you; but if you hold bread in your hand, and call, ‘swan, swan,’ it will sail up, and eat from your hand. Then it looks in your face for



GEORGE AND THE SWAN.

more. See how it turns the side of its head toward us, as though listening to what we say."

When George heard these words, he was no longer afraid of the swan; but said, "I wish I had some bread, so that I could give to it." Henry felt in his pockets, and found some grains of corn, which he gave to his cousin, for the swan. Mr. Green then led his son to the water's edge, and told him to be careful not to fall in. The little boy stooped down, and holding out his hand, called, "swan, swan." Then the swan sailed

slowly toward him; but when George saw it so near, he was afraid, and again drew back. His father told him that the swan was hungry; and then George took courage, and held out the corn until the swan came near and ate it. The little boy felt happy that he had mastered his fear, and was pleased when his cousin and his father told him he had done well for so young a child.

After they had looked at the fishes, and the swan, about half an hour, Mr. Green said that they would walk on further, and see some other parts of the

country. George had many questions to ask about the swan; but while his father was answering, something jumped from the road before them into the grass. George started back, but Henry told him it was only a toad, and that he would catch it for him to look at. Mr. Green and his son laughed, as they saw Henry running about among the grass, trying to put his hands on the toad, which, each time, jumped away from him. But at last he caught it, and brought it to his cousin. He saw that it was of a grey color, and dotted all over with small

pimples; that its eyes were small, and very handsome, and its fore legs were shaped a little like the arms of a child. He also saw that it could draw a thin, white film over its eye, without shutting it. George was very much pleased with this little animal, and asked to have it in his own hands. He felt that its skin was cold and soft, and his father told him, that he had better put it down, lest he might hurt it. George did so; and it hopped away in the grass. Mr. Green told him, that some boys were very cruel to toads, and that some older persons

thought the toad was poisonous. "This, boys," said he, "is all wrong. The toad is a harmless little creature, that hops among grass and flowers, catching flies, or looking with its cunning eye at any body that passes along. I have read of a lady who kept one of these little animals in her garden, for several years; and when she came out in the evening and called it, it would hop from its hole, and eat its food from her hand. Toads live many years; and some have been kept for several months without any food, and yet when let out of their pri-

son, they hopped about as lively as ever. They often go into the water ; and in the winter time they sleep in the ground for three or four months."

After they had walked a little further on, Mr. Green thought that George must be getting tired, and turned into a path which led toward the house. As they were passing along this, many grasshoppers and butterflies, flew around them, and birds of handsome color darted from one flower to another. Locusts and crickets, filled the air with their merry sounds, and the fields were decked with

their most lively colors. George's heart beat with joy; he felt as if he could sing, and run about like the insects—he had scarcely ever been so joyful. In a little while they came to a stream of water, which ran across the road. A bridge had been placed over this stream, and when they came on it, Mr. Green stopped, that he might show George the fishes, which were darting up and down, chasing each other, and sometimes leaping out of the water. George could see a great many more here than he had seen in the pond; because the water was not

so deep. His father pointed out to him several different kinds, and told their names. The sun fish had broad bodies, speckled with green and yellow, and strong fins running along their backs. The roach was a narrow, round fish, about as long as a man's finger. The cat fish had a large, broad head, a soft body without scales, white below, and black above, and a wide mouth. The perch was a long white fish, with shining scales, and a narrow body. Mr. Green showed the boys all these and several other kinds. Henry said that his father



HENRY FISHING.

sometimes came to this creek to fish, when they wanted fish for supper; but he never caught them only to throw them away again. "That is right," said his uncle; "no one should take the life of any thing merely out of sport. These little fish are as happy, and enjoy themselves as well as we do; and I would rather watch them swimming about so nimbly, than to see them dragged from the water with a hook in their mouth, and then left to die on the ground."

While they were talking in this manner, something rose to the top of the

water, which did not look like a fish. It was broad, and nearly round, like a plate turned upside down; and its back was covered with yellow and red spots. Mr. Green told the boys to be very still, and watch it. By and by, it put its head above the water, and George saw its little eyes, which looked something like the toad's. Then two very short, thick legs appeared on each side, and the little creature began to swim about, on the top of the water. George was so glad at seeing this, that he could be quiet no more, but asked his father what it was.

“It is a tortoise,” replied Mr. Green. “This is called the water tortoise, because he lives in the water. The land tortoise is found in the fields. But they can both live either in water or on land. What seems to be the back, is a very hard shell, so hard that you could scarcely break it with a stone. This shell covers him all over, except the legs, head, and tail; but these the tortoise can draw inside, and then shut up his shell. This shell is not all of a piece, but divided into plates, so that the tortoise can move

it a little when he wants to shut himself in."

"See, see, father," said George, "it is swimming under the bridge; and now I see the hole in the shell, where its head goes in."

"It will come from under the bridge on the other side," Mr. Green replied; "we will go to the other railing of the bridge, and see it swim out."

The two boys and Mr. Green, now crossed to the other side of the bridge, and watched for the tortoise. But it did not come; and George's father told him,

that it had either gone among the bushes along the water edge, or else sunk to the bottom, when it heard them talking together. They then walked over the bridge, and continued walking in the lane leading to the house; but George often cast a look behind, hoping that he might get another sight of the tortoise, which he thought more wonderful than any thing he had yet seen.

Before the boys and Mr. Green could reach Uncle John's house, they had to pass through a large gate, which opened into a field where some sheep were feed-

ing. This gate was fastened with bars, and held by a latch, and while George's father was lifting the bars, the little boy peeped through the railings of the fence, at the sheep. He felt a little afraid at first; but when he saw his cousin pass through, he was ashamed to show any thing like fear; so he went through, too. Just then, one of the sheep came running up to Henry, and put her head against him, rubbing and turning round and round, like a cat. By its side trotted a little lamb, so brisk and playful, that George was delighted. It came up to



GEORGE AND THE LAMB.

him, and rubbed itself against his knees. Then the little fellow stooped, and laid his head on the lamb's back, and called it his own little sheep. His father laughed; and Henry told him, that this lamb and its mother, were pet animals, which he had trained to come to him, whenever he was near them, and that he always fed them himself. George asked his father how the sheep could learn all this.

“There is no animal, George,” said Mr. Green, “which may not be taught something. Sheep, and cows, and horses, and

dogs, soon learn to know the person who treats them well, and they will come to such a one sooner than they will to any body else. I have read of a dog which loved its master so much, that it would not eat food from any one else, and would howl and whine if he was away from it for a few hours. At last the man died: and then the poor dog would not eat any thing at all, but lay day and night on its master's grave. Some persons brought it home, and locked it in a room; but this was of no use; for the dog would eat nothing, and had to be let

out. It starved to death in the graveyard. This shows how wrong it is to use these dumb brutes cruelly; and had Henry beat his sheep when it was a lamb, or taken no notice of it, it would not now run to meet him whenever he opens the gate. You see, then, that even the lower animals love those who are kind to them; and this, boys, should teach you a lesson, to be kind not to animals only, but to your own playmates, and all you go with; for kindness is sure of one day meeting its reward."

By this time they had reached the

house. Uncle John was not there; but Aunt Mary met them at the door, and brought out chairs for them to sit on the piazza, and look out on the fields. This piazza, as I have told you before, was very handsome. A neat railing went round it, in every part, except just in front of the door, where you stepped off on the ground; and many pretty vines, with small flowers, twined themselves along this railing. Over head was a wooden arch, or shed, supported by three or four posts; and in front, thick honeysuckle vines, ran up from the ground,

and covered the shed. When one looked through the opening in these vines, which had been left for a door, he could see far off into the country. In the morning, the honeysuckles hung in clusters, heavy with dew, and smelled very sweet; and bees, and other insects, came with their cheerful hum, to gather honey from the flowers.

When Mr. Green and the two boys had seated themselves, little Charles came out and climbed upon a stone bench, which stood against the house. He wanted to hear all that was said. Mr.

Green talked a long time about the things they had seen in their morning's walk, and of the flowers and trees which they beheld around them. All at once, George cried out:

"See, see, father, what a big bee—what a humming it makes, and how pretty its wings are. I never saw a bee like that before."

His father smiled, and said, "That is a bird, George, and not a bee. Your cousin, I dare say, can tell you what name it goes by."

"We call it a humming bird, uncle."

Henry looked up at Mr. Green, and said, "is that the right name?"

"Yes, Henry, that is right. And why do you suppose it is called so?"

"I suppose because it makes that humming noise. Is not that the reason, uncle?"

"Yes, my dear boy," said Mr. Green, "you are right. That noise is made by the bird's wings, as they flutter up and down. See how swiftly it darts from flower to flower, so that the eye can scarcely follow it. It is because it flies so swiftly, that it makes the humming

noise. What do you think of the humming bird, George?"

"I think it is a dear little bird," said George, "I would like to have it in my apron."

"It is beautiful, too, uncle," said Henry.

"Yes," replied Mr. Green; "it is one of the most handsome of birds. It is also the smallest, and some people call it the 'Bee Bird.' This is a pretty large one, nearly as long as my thumb; but I have seen them with bodies no larger than a wild bee's, and with wings so thin as to look almost like those of a

butterfly. When a number of these birds are darting from flower to flower, or balancing themselves upon their wings, they present a most lively and beautiful sight. Henry, do you know what humming birds eat?"

"I suppose they eat honey, like the bees, uncle; for I see them here, morning and evening, dipping their heads in the flowers, and flying from one bunch of honeysuckles to another."

"You are right," said his uncle; "other birds live either on insects, seeds, fruit, berries, or small animals; but this little

flutterer seems to be too delicate for such coarse food. He lives on honey—the pure juice of the honeysuckle and the bergamot.”

“Are they ever put in cages?” asked Henry.

“I have read of a few which were kept in the cage; but I believe that none of them lived more than a few months. The humming bird is too delicate to bear imprisonment. It is never in its proper place, except among roses and honeysuckles, on a beautiful morning like this. I suppose, also, that if confinement did

not injure this little animal, it would be difficult to feed it during the winter. The birds I have told you of, were fed on a kind of paste, made chiefly of honey; but they often appeared sick after they had eaten it."

"See, see," said George, "it is gone! How quick it flew! I wish I could chase it."

Mr. Green and Henry laughed. "It would be a tiresome chase, my son, for a little boy not six years old."

"Why could we not have a humming bird in a cage, father. Mother would

give it its breakfast and its supper, and it would not die. Shall we have one, father?"

"Was your walk around the fields to-day, very pleasant, George?" said Mr. Green.

"Oh, yes sir," the little boy replied. "It is so nice to see the trees, and flowers, and the water, and that fine big swan. And then the fishes darted about so quick; and you know, Henry, what a funny thing we saw in the creek. It had a hard name though. The walk was pleasant, father."

Mr. Green replied, "that funny thing was a tortoise; you must try and remember the name, George. But now, how would you like to be locked up in a room by yourself, where you could only look at these fine things, without ever walking in the fields again?"

George looked up in his father's face without speaking, for he did not know what Mr. Green meant. At first, he feared that his father was displeased; but at last, he said slowly, "I would not like that, father."

"Well, George," said Mr. Green, "do

you not think, that it would be hard to take the little humming bird from the fields, and the flowers, and this sweet smelling air, in order to shut him up in a cage, where he would pine away and die. He would be better, my child, in his own snug nest." George had not thought of this before; but now he said, that he did not want to put the bird in a cage.

"But, uncle," said Henry, "mother has a Canary bird in a cage."

"It has never been out of a cage, I suppose," said his uncle. "Canary birds

are not natives of this country—that is, they are not found wild in our woods, or fields. They are brought from islands in the ocean, many miles from America; and if those who have them in cages, should turn them out, the birds would probably die. If they could live here as well as in their own country, I think it would be better to let them fly away.”

Mr. Green was now called away, and the three boys were left to play by themselves, on the piazza. George had many things to ask his cousin, and among others, made him promise to show him

the Canary bird. George had seen Canaries in cages; but as his mother did not keep any, he had never been very near to one. They played and talked together until the bell rang for dinner. George had never heard such a thing at home; but Henry told him, that persons who live in the country, almost always ring a bell at dinner time, so that the men who are working in the fields, or the barns, may know that dinner hour is come.

After dinner, Henry and Charles were put in a little room by themselves to

study their lessons; for Henry went to the village school, about a mile from Uncle John's house, and Charles learned lessons at home, which he recited to his mother. This day they had been permitted to stay at home on account of their cousin's visit. George remained with his aunt during the greater part of the afternoon; but an hour before sunset, he and Henry went with Mr. Green and Uncle John, to take a walk. They entered a different road from the one that George's father had taken in the morning, so that the little boy saw a number

of things that were new to him. In a short time they were near a thick and dark wood; and George was in astonishment at the high trees, and the loud, hollow noise that rolled from the dark space within, whenever the wind blew. He was glad to hear Uncle John say, that they would not go in; for he felt afraid at seeing such a gloomy place. As they were walking around the edge of the wood, George saw a number of handsome birds flying from tree to tree, and hopping along the ground. He wished very much to run after some of them,

but he was ashamed to say so; but at last, when a bird with a red body, and black and yellow wings, lighted on the ground only a few feet from him, he exclaimed, "See, father, what a dear little red bird. Let me catch him, father; I know I can catch him!"

"You may try, George," said his father. "But I fear you will find the bird's wings swifter than a little boy's feet." The little fellow was sure that he could catch the bird, because it stood very still, and as he thought, had gone to sleep. So he crept along slowly on his toes, till he got

near enough, and then, making a great spring, tried to cover the ground where the bird was, with his apron. But the moment he jumped, the bird flew up into a tree. Poor George looked up with a sorrowful countenance, and said, "Ah—he's gone, uncle; if I had only jumped a little sooner. I most had him." Then the little fellow came to his father, hanging down his head, for he was very much ashamed. But Uncle John said kindly,

"Never mind, George. It is not every little boy who can catch a bird, nor even get so near as you did. That great jump



GEORGE AND THE BIRD.

was well done for a little fellow like you, and I do not think that any of us could have done better than you did."

George was a little comforted by these words; but he could not help thinking, that if he had crept a step further, he could have caught the bird. They then continued their walk round a corner of the wood, and entered a path which led through a fine meadow, in which cows were feeding. Just at this moment, something started from behind a stone, lying beside this path, and gliding across, disappeared in the grass.

‘There’s a snake, George,’ said Henry, “and what a big one. Last week I killed a snake which had got into our cellar. What was it called father?”

“That was a viper,” said Uncle John. “Its bite is poison, and I allowed you to kill it, because it might have bitten you or Charles. But this animal you have just seen, is not a viper, but a black snake. It grows to a great size, but is not poisonous. It has been lying near that stone to catch a toad, or a field mouse, which it eats. Sometimes, too, it catches birds. But look on that tree,

George, which stands before us, near the path, and tell me what you see."

There were three squirrels on the tree. One was sitting on his hind legs, very busy cracking nuts, with his long, bushy tail thrown over his back. The other two were chasing each other round the tree. George, who had never seen a squirrel, was so delighted, that he clapped his hands, and exclaimed: "Do uncle, get one for me. I will carry it to the house, and show it to Aunt Mary."

Uncle John laughed, and said, "I would make out no better, George, than

you did catching the bird. The squirrel would be at the top of the tree before I could reach him. But if we are quiet, we may see him play and crack nuts." George watched them much delighted; but he could not help wishing, that he had so pretty a creature to carry home to his mother. At last he said:

"The country is better than the town. There is nothing but houses in the city, and no fishes or squirrels."

Uncle John smiled at the little boy's impatience. He told him, that squirrels were sometimes kept in large cages, in



GEORGE AND THE SQUIRRELS.

the city, but that they ought not to be handled, because they would bite most severely. "You see," he added, "what strong teeth they have; they can crack the hardest nuts in a moment. How would you feel, George, if your finger was in a squirrel's mouth?"

"Do they often come down on the ground?" asked George. His uncle told him, that they might sometimes be seen running on fences, or along the ground; but that they liked better to be in the trees. "Each squirrel," he said, "digs a hole for himself, either in the ground,

or in the hollow branch of a tree. Here he makes a snug nest, and lays up a store of food. When winter comes, he goes into this nest, closes the mouth of his hole, and rolls himself up snugly, with his tail for a cover, and thus goes to sleep; and we see no more of the squirrel until spring."

The sun had now set, and Uncle John said, that they must hurry home for supper. George would have been willing to lose his supper, if he could have heard and seen more; but as he was a good boy, he knew that his uncle should be

obeyed. They walked up the lane much faster than they had come from home, the two boys keeping ahead, and every now and then, running in the grass to pull some handsome flower, or chase a butterfly. A great many moths, with large wings, were fluttering about, and high in the air, the night-hawks had begun to scream. The cool breeze of evening swept delightfully over the meadow, and every thing appeared so still and solemn, that George felt as though he were in a pleasing dream. They soon reached a gate that led up from the mea-

dow to the spring house. When they reached this, George stopped a little while to look at the spring. Large stones had been placed round it, and it was covered with boards to prevent any thing from falling in, which might injure the water. The stones were overgrown with moss, which was very thick, soft, and beautiful. George pulled two or three pieces to look at, and then the whole party again walked toward the house. They passed around Uncle John's second barn, and up a pleasant little road to the house. George's aunt was waiting for

them ; and as soon as he saw her, he ran up, almost out of breath, and said,

“ O, aunt, we have had such a nice walk ! We saw snakes, and squirrels, and birds, and the woods, and big butterflies. I tried to catch a bird, aunt ; and, see, I have brought some flowers for you.”

His aunt laughed, and said, “ Thank you, George. But are you not tired ? ”

“ No, indeed, aunt. I wish you had been with us, to see the squirrels. I could have gone a good many miles further, if Uncle John had not said that

supper was ready," said the bright-eyed boy.

His aunt again laughed, and said, "You have been far enough to-night; but now we will have supper, and you shall sit by me, because you have brought me such a nice bunch of flowers." Then she took him by the hand, and led him into the house, while Mr. Green followed, leading Henry by the hand, and Uncle John came next. When George sat down at the table, he was really very hungry, for his long walk had given him an appetite.

After supper, George and his two cousins, went out upon the piazza, to play. It was growing dark, and the bats were flying about close to the ground, while every now and then, owls could be heard from the wood, where George had been. But a still louder noise came from another direction, and seemed to sound like the rolling of a great number of stones down the stairs. George asked Henry what it was.

“They are frogs,” said his cousin. “They live in the pond which you saw this morning. Every night they come

out, and sit on stones, and croak as you hear them."

"How do you mean, croak?" asked George, for he did not know what the word croak meant.

"The noise you hear, is called croaking," replied Henry; "if you were near the pond, you could scarcely hear one speak, for that loud noise."

"And do the fish croak, too," asked George. His cousin laughed.

"No, George, fish do not make any noise. They cannot come out of the water as frogs do. In the day time the

frogs lie still under stones, and among the bushes; and in the winter time, we hear nothing of them. Father says they sleep all winter, in the mud, at the bottom of the pond."

"They must be very cold, Henry," said George. "If they are not fish, how can they live in the water?"

"Father will tell you all about it," said his cousin. "He says that God made the frogs, as well as larger animals, and that he made them to live in the water. It is as easy for them to live in the water as it is for us to live on the ground."

The boys were now called in for evening prayer—for Uncle John always prayed with his family, night and morning. After this was over, the children were allowed to amuse themselves in any manner they chose, for an hour: after which, they were taken to bed. George lay awake a good while, listening to the frogs, or talking with Henry; but at last he fell asleep.

Thus passed his first day in the country. It would take a long time to tell all the fine things that he saw during the two weeks that Mr. Green staid at

Uncle John's. Sometimes he walked with Henry to school, and waited until his father came to bring him back. Sometimes he sat by the water, watching the fishes, or went with his father and his uncle, to see the haymakers. Once Uncle John placed him on a load of hay, so that he got a ride up to the barn. Nearly every day his aunt took him with her, to help gather vegetables in the vegetable garden; or else in the afternoon, he carried a little basket, and ran after her as she went to pick strawberries, raspberries, and currants.

But while George was at Uncle John's, a sad thing happened with the Canary bird. One morning Henry went up stairs to feed it, when he entered the room, he called, "Dickey, Dickey," for that was the bird's name. Before, whenever it heard Henry's voice, it jumped about its cage, sung as loud as it could, and appeared very glad. But this morning it neither jumped nor sung. Henry called again; but Dickey was quiet. Then he got on a chair, and looked into the cage. Dickey was there; but he lay on his back, in the bottom of his cage, his

wings were spread out, and all his beautiful feathers ruffled. Henry covered his face with his hands, and burst into tears; he knew that poor Dickey was dead. Aunt Mary then came up. She was very sorry; but she told Henry not to cry, for that would do no good. Taking the cage from the nail, she carried it down into the garden, where George, Charles, and a little girl belonging to the neighbors, were playing. Then she opened the cage, and took Dickey out. George and the other children stood looking at her, without speaking a word, for the tears stood

in each eye. "Something has got into the cage," said Aunt Mary, "which has poisoned its food." Then she told Henry to put it in the cage until school time, when he might take it with him, and throw it in the meadow. "No, mother," said Henry, "I will bury him. Dickey shall not be eaten by the owls; he shall have a grave, for other birds to sing over." "You may bury him, Henry," replied his mother; "but not in the garden." Henry knew a snug place by the hedge, outside the garden. So he ran into the house for his little spade, and having



THE DEAD CANARY.

found it, he came out, and told the children to follow him. George went next, carrying poor Dickey in his apron, and Charles, holding the little girl by the hand, followed. Then mother opened the gate, and they passed through, walking with slow and sad steps round the garden paling, and down the path that led to the hedge. "Do not let poor Dickey fall," said Henry, as they climbed through a rail fence, into the meadow. "I am holding him tight," replied George; and in a little while they reached the spot which Henry had chosen. Then he

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dug a nice, wide grave, and they all gathered moss and dry leaves to line it with. Dickey was laid in on his side, with his head on a pillow of moss; and while Henry was placing him, George and Charles, broke up the earth into fine pieces, to cover him with. "He'll never sing again," said Henry. The others could not speak. They covered Dickey with leaves, and then spread the earth over him till the hole was full. Henry piled it on, and patted it down on each side, as he had seen done to the graves in the church yard. Two little sticks

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were put in the ground, one at the head of the grave, the other at the foot; and Henry said he would ask Uncle John for a board, as a substitute for a head stone. The children then went up to the house, where Aunt Mary told them that it would do no good to cry for Dickey, since he was dead. Then each one tried to look cheerful; but through the day they could not enjoy themselves at play as they had done while the Canary was alive.

Next day Uncle John took Mr. Green, Aunt Mary, and all the children, in his carriage, to ride around and see the

country. This was one of the most pleasant days which George had spent. He saw a number of small cottages, where women were sitting at the door sewing, while little boys no larger than himself, were out in the field or the garden, working very hard. George saw that some of them appeared tired, while others were very hot in the warm sun. He could not help telling his uncle that he pitied them very much.

“Why do you pity them, George?” said Uncle John.

“Because, uncle, they have to work

hard in the hot sun. I wish I had a plenty of money to give to them, so that they need not go in the sun, but might have a nice coach to ride in, such as you have."

"Do you suppose they would feel better and happier if they had these things, George?" George said he did think so.

"Then tell me," said Uncle John, "did you feel happy day before yesterday, when you were making hay with the haymakers?"

"Oh, yes sir," replied the little boy, "the hay smelled so sweet."

"Were you tired, George?"

"Yes, sir; but I did not mind that. May I not make hay again, some time?"

"Perhaps so," said Uncle John; "but now I want you to answer me two or three questions. You say that you were tired, and it was also a very warm day. Now tell me, George. Would you rather have been in the house, or have been making hay in the hot sun?"

"I would rather make hay, uncle. I did not mind the heat."

"So you see, George, that even hard work in the hot sun did not make you

feel unhappy. And good, honest labor will not make any one unhappy, unless he chooses to be so. The little children over in that field, have poor parents; they work to help their parents to support them; and I have generally found, that while at work, they are contented and happy. Little boys like you, ought not to work too hard; but if their parents are poor, it is better for the boys to work than to run about the fields or streets idle, when their fathers and mothers cannot take care of them."

"But, father," said Henry, "if we

could give them money so that they need not work any more, would not that be better than leaving them to labor so hard?"

"I don't think it would," said Uncle John. "Nothing makes a man happier than honest employment of some kind; and if these boys and men, whom you see, were each to receive a bag of gold, it would be likely to make them proud, miserly, or unhappy, in some other way. God, my dear children, knows what is best for every one that he has placed in this world; and if we love Him, we shall

be happy, whether toiling in the fields or riding in carriages. Those who cannot get work are the ones we should help; but let every man or boy who has work, labor at it as long as he chooses."

On this day Uncle John visited several persons that he knew, all of whom were glad to see George, and the other children. When they were going home, Uncle John drove to the top of a hill, which was so high, that a person standing on it, could see to a very great distance on every side. Uncle John stopped his carriage, in order to allow the whole

party time to enjoy so fine a sight. George saw streams of water, and long, dark woods, and fields of grain waving, and glittering in the sun, and hundreds of farm houses, cottages, or country seats, scattered in every direction, some standing on hills, others just peeping from behind thick trees, or clustering honeysuckles. He had never looked on so lovely a sight. "Oh, is it not lovely, father?" he said.

"It is, indeed, George," answered Mr. Green; "these, my son, are a portion of the works of God."

“It reminds me,” said Aunt Mary, “of what was read in church last Sabbath, from the Bible, ‘the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.’ The flowers and the little birds seem to unite to-day, in thanking the good Being, who made them.”

They now drove down the hill, and Uncle John said, that they would be home in about an hour and a half. When they had gone a little further, they reached two very old and crooked trees,

standing in a field close to the wayside. A great many little birds were flying in and out of these trees, screaming, chattering, and making every other kind of noise. Uncle John drove close to the fence to see what was the matter. After they had looked at the tree for some time, without being able to find out what ailed the little birds, Henry suddenly exclaimed, "It is an owl, father. I see him through the leaves, sitting on a broken branch. Look how he shakes his head, and snaps his bill. And now I see his big eyes. See, George, that is the

bird which makes such a queer noise at night." Every one looked in the direction pointed out by Henry; and now Mr. Green and Uncle John, could see the owl; but little George and Charles, had to be held up a long while, before they caught sight of him.

"Well, what do you think of him?" said Uncle John.

"He has got nice big eyes," replied George. Every body laughed at this answer; and then Charles said that the owl was ugly, and ought to be killed.

No, no," said his father; "owls have

the same right to live as humming birds, or butterflies have; and I have never thought that the owl was so ugly a bird, as many persons suppose. He eats little birds, it is true; but then birds eat butterflies, and other insects, and you know, Charles, that you are yourself very fond of roasted chicken. So, when the owl eats small birds, he does no more harm, and is no more cruel than you, or the little birds. Beside, he helps the farmer, by clearing his barns of rats and mice. I think, George, after all, was right, in saying, that he has very nice, big eyes."

"Will this owl catch these little birds if they stay till night?" asked Henry.

"Yes," said Uncle John. "He has lost himself somehow, and now he must suffer all day from the insults of the smaller birds. But if they stay till after sundown, they will pay dearly for their fun."

Uncle John stopped at one more place before he got home; and the kind person who lived there, allowed the children to walk in the garden, in order to amuse themselves after their long ride. As Henry passed by a bush, he saw a bird

fly into it, holding something in its mouth; so he felt sure there was a nest in the bush. He did not like to part the branches, for fear of disturbing the birds; but after peeping into it for some time, he at last saw a nest, with five little birds in it. Then he said, in a whisper:

“George, George; come here quick—here is a bird’s nest.” George ran as quickly as he could, and stooping down quietly, peeped through the branches. Then he saw the little birds, and was just going to clap his hands, when Henry whispered, that he must be still. So the



THE BIRD'S NEST.

two boys sat watching the birds, until the old one came to the nest with a large worm in her mouth. This, George saw her cut into pieces with her bill, and give a piece to each bird. As they were returning to the house, George asked his cousin if owls built nests.

“Yes,” replied Henry; “I have heard father say, that their nests are as large as my hat, and hid in hollow trees, or in the tops of barns; but we must hurry home, George, for I hear mother calling to us.”

After they had left this house, they were not long in reaching home. Every

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one was pleased with so fine a ride; supper was waiting for them; for, Aunt Mary, knowing that the journey would make them hungry, had given orders to have supper waiting.

Two days after this, Mr. Green returned to the city. Uncle John wanted him to stay longer; but this he could not do. George was very sorry to part with his cousins, and his kind aunt and uncle; but his time was out; he stepped into the carriage, and in a few hours George was sitting on his mother's knee, telling her of his wonderful adventures in the country.

